GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3126
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2000
GLOBAL TERRORISM
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Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have signed any agreement with the foreign countries for setting up Joint Working Group to combating the global menace of terrorism;

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise; and

(c) the time by which these groups are likely to be set-up?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) - (c) :

(i) India and USA have established a Joint Working Group to intensify their cooperation in combating terrorism. The first meeting of the Indo-US Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism took place in Washington D.C. on February 7-8, 2000. The two sides expressed concern at the growing menace of international terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking. The two sides unequivocally condemned all acts, methods, and practices of terrorism, that may be invoked to justify them. The Indian Government agreed to the US offer of Anti-terrorism Assistance programmes, the specifics to be determined in future visits. The group also decided to convene a meeting of each side`s legal experts in April to discuss the Indian-proposed UN Terrorism Convention. The Indian side shared with the US side our information and assessment relating to the nature and origin of cross-border terrorism in India and to the identity of individuals and agencies involved in the hijacking of IC-814. The two sides agreed to intensify their joint cooperation to ensure that the perpetrators of the hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight 814 are brought to justice, as part of their joint efforts to combat international terrorism. The two countries agreed on a range of measures to enhance cooperation to combat international terrorism, and as part of this process, the two sides would share experience, exchange information, and coordinate approaches and action.

(ii) There is an Indo-German Working Group on Terrorism, the first meeting of which was held in Meckenheim, Bonn on September 15-17, 1998. The meeting discussed issues relating to the kidnapping of foreigners in Kashmir in July 1995, terrorists groups based both in India and Germany and the external funding of terrorist groups. No formal agreement establishing this joint working group has, however, been signed.

(iii) An India-Nepal Joint Working Group on Border Management (JWG) was set up in June 1997 to prevent misuse of the open India-Nepal border for activities directed against either country by terrorist and other elements. Three meetings of the JWG have been held so far, the latest on February 1-3, 2000 in Kathmandu. Concrete measures and cooperation on security issues are discussed, reviewed and followed up at these meetings.

(iv) India and Bangladesh have been regularly discussing various security related matters including terrorism at different levels through diplomatic channels and institutional mechanisms existing between the two countries, including, inter alia, the India-Bangladesh Joint Working Group. The sixth meeting of the Joint Working Group was held in January, 2000.

(v) Under the provisions of an agreement signed in January 1994 between India and Myanmar, the two countries periodically hold India-Myanmar national-level and India-Myanmar sectoral-level meetings at the level of Joint Secretary and Home Secretary respectively. At these meetings, issues pertaining to cooperation in the area of control of cross-border insurgency are discussed. The last sectoral-level meeting was held in November 1999 and the last national-level meeting was held in July 1999.